

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 08/17/2009 has been entered. No claim is amended. Claims 1-7, 9-15, 17-22, 24-30, 32-38, 40-46, 48-54 and 56-58 are currently pending.
2. A NOA was issued on 05/15/2009. No additional claim amendment was received thereafter. Additional IDS received on 08/17/2009 is considered. The reasons for allowance as per NOA issued on 05/15/2009 still hold after the consideration of the IDS.
3. Applicant's submission filed on 03/11/2009 was entered. Claims 1, 6-7, 9, 17, 24, 29-30, 32, 40, 45-46, 48 and 58 were amended.
4. Amendment received on 07/22/2008 was entered into record. Claims 18 and 58 were amended.
5. Applicant's submission filed on 10/30/2007 was entered. Claims 1, 9, 17, 24, 32, 40 and 48 were amended. Claims 8, 16, 23, 31, 39, 47 and 55 were cancelled.
6. Amendment received on 04/16/2007 was entered into record. Claims 1, 9, 12, 17, 24, 32, 35, 40 and 48 were amended.
7. Applicant's submission filed on 09/11/2006 was entered. Claims 1, 9, 17, 24, 32, 40 and 48 were amended.

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8. Amendment received on 02/27/2006 was entered into record. Claims 9, 12, 17, 32, 35, 48 and 51 were amended. Claims 56-58 were new.

Priority

9. This application has no priority claim made. The filing date is 12/07/2001.

Information Disclosure Statement

10. An initialed and dated copy of Applicant's IDS form 1449, Paper No. 20090817, is attached to the instant Office action.

Reasons for Allowance

11. Claims 1-7, 9-15, 17-22, 24-30, 32-38, 40-46, 48-54 and 56-58 are allowed as per amendment received on 03/11/2009.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior arts of record issued to Uga et al. (US 6718326 B2) and Venkatachary et al. (US 20020089937 A1) together fail to teach or suggest "a method of processing a packet in a router comprising: creating a plurality of multi-feature packet processing rules, wherein said creating comprises, for each multi-feature packet processing rule of said multi-feature packet processing rules, forming said each multi-feature packet processing rule by merging a plurality of features according to a feature hierarchy, each of said features is defined in said feature hierarchy, at least one of said features in said feature hierarchy comprise another of said features in said feature hierarchy, said at least one of said features in said feature hierarchy is a complex feature, said another of said features in said feature hierarchy is a simple feature, and said at least one of said features in said feature hierarchy subsumes said another of said features in said feature hierarchy; populating said plurality of multi-feature packet processing rules in a multi-

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feature classification memory; populating an associated content-addressable memory with a plurality of indices, wherein said indices are indices of said plurality of multi-feature packet processing rules in said multi-feature classification memory, said associated content-addressable memory and said multi-feature classification memory are associated with one another by virtue of said associated content-addressable memory being coupled to provide an index of said indices to said multi-feature classification memory, and each of said indices corresponds to at least one of said multi-feature packet processing rules; using said index to retrieve a multi-feature packet processing rule from said multi-feature classification memory; and processing said packet according to said multi-feature packet processing rule" in combination with all the elements of each independent claim as presented by Applicant [See page 2 through page 16 of applicant's amended received 03/11/2009]. Applicant argues that the prior art does not disclose or suggest the limitation combination of "said at least one of said features in said feature hierarchy is a complex feature", "said another of said features in said feature hierarchy is a simple feature" and "said at least one of said features in said feature hierarchy subsumes said another of said features in said feature hierarchy". This argument is considered persuasive as per 1st paragraph on page 23 through 1st paragraph on page 25 of applicant's amended received 03/11/2009.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peling A. Shaw whose telephone number is (571) 272-7968. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00 - 4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William C. Vaughn can be reached on (571) 272-3922. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Peling A Shaw/
Examiner, Art Unit 2444